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At U.N., Walters Hopes to Avert 'Lynching' of U.S.

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Special to The New York Times

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., May 30 — The new United States delegate, Lieut. Gen. Vernon A. Walters, says his top priority will be to increase support for American positions by refusing to tolerate unfair criticism of the United States, while at the same time paying attention to developing nations.

"The United Nations has become a place where many countries seek to achieve a lynching of the United States by resolution," the retired general asserted in an interview this week. "It is a most shamefully unfair attitude and one that arouses serious opposition from me."

As for diplomatic tactics toward the developing nations, he said, "You can try to enlighten them to the true motives of the United States; you can show them how it's to their advantage to vote with us and you can make plain that voting against us will have some cost in our bilateral relations."

"Withholding of aid should be considered on a case-by-case basis," he said, "but I would certainly never advocate withholding aid from starving people."

General Walters, who assumed his new post last week, was reluctant to discuss how his style would differ from that of his predecessor, Jeane J. Kirkpatrick. "Obviously, she came from academia and I come from an army background," he said. "But I think we are entirely on the same wavelength in the defense of the U.S. and its values and its interests."

Needs to Learn About Mideast

One area that General Walters said he would have to learn more about is the Middle East. "This problem is the biggest single challenge in the world," he said. "I've sought to avoid it in the past, but I won't be able to avoid it here."

Despite what he said was a lifelong belief in the value of talking to one's foes, General Walters said he would have no dealings with the Palestine Liberation Organization at the United Nations. "The fact is," he said, "the P.L.O. is committed to the destruction of Israel and therefore we cannot deal with them."

On the subject of apartheid in South Africa, General Walters called it "a doctrine that is abhorrent to every freedom-loving American."

But how he deals with the matter at the United Nations, he said, will depend "on how the issue arises."

General Walters, 68 years old, who visited 108 countries in the past four years as President Reagan's Ambassador at Large, speaks seven foreign languages, five of them fluently, and whenever possible intends to speak to colleagues in their own tongue.

He'll Socialize in the Lounge

Unlike Dr. Kirkpatrick, he said he planned to spend time socializing with colleagues in the United Nations delegates' lounge. And he said he would attend as many meetings of the Security

Council as he could, and not just when he made a speech.

"That's what I came here for," he said.

General Walters said he was confident that his background as Deputy Director of Central Intelligence would not hurt his ability to deal with his colleagues.

"I've dealt with some people very hostile to the United States," he said. "It didn't seem to bother them. After all, they run fairly large intelligence services of their own."

Nor, he said, did he believe that the transition from secret diplomacy to one of the most highly visible diplomatic posts in the world would be difficult.

"I'm not intimidated and I don't have apprehensions," he said. "I'm not a timid man — nor a modest one."

"I'd describe myself as a pragmatist tinged with idealism," he added.

'Slightly Right of Center'

He said he was "slightly right of center, not a superpatriot, a believer in the values of the country," and criticized those who characterize him as an ultra rightist, calling them "chic liberal."

"If you're not in that mainstream," he said, "you're an ultrarightist."

A Roman Catholic, General Walters says he draws inspiration from a paraphrased version of what is called the serenity prayer: "Lord, enable me to change the things I can, the ability to live with the things I can't, but above all, Lord, give me the wisdom to know the difference, so I don't waste my time beating my head against a stone wall."

As for his heroes, "Jesus Christ stands at the head of the list." He also admires Sir Winston Churchill, Dwight D. Eisenhower and Charles de Gaulle as men of courage.

He calls President Reagan "a man who has given the country back a pride of being American."

'One of the Noblest Wars'

General Walters said he feels more strongly than ever that the Vietnam War was, as he wrote in his memoirs, "one of the noblest and most unselfish wars" in American history.

"When American bombs were falling everywhere in Vietnam, when there was fighting in every village, when all the young men were drafted into the South Vietnamese Army, there were no boat people," he said. "It took the coming of a Communist government in Saigon to drive two million people to the sea in open boats." According to the most recent United Nations figures, 555,073 Vietnamese have fled by boat

since 1975. Many others have fled on foot.

He said he remained committed to the use of covert action "if we use it effectively."

He went on: "The only problem is that it is difficult to use in the United States. When the Soviet Union lands a tank battalion in El Bluff in Nicaragua, that's O.K. If we landed a battalion of tanks to support the contras it would be one of the greatest storms of modern times. There's an inequity here." El Bluff is the port where Soviet bloc ships are reported to have delivered military equipment.

As the chief delegate to the United

Nations, he says he intends to study charges made by the Senate Intelligence Committee last week that one-fourth of the 800 Soviet employees at the United Nations are spying.

"I hesitate this early in my career to utter a pontification on this," he said.